

**Virginia Comprehensive Assistance Network [VA CAN] Meeting**  
**April 17, 2007**  
**Meeting Notes**

**Attendance:**

Dana Brancolini—Small Business Assistance Program (SBAP), DEQ  
Mike Eisenman—Virginia Commonwealth University  
Stu Neal—small business and entrepreneurship consultant  
Jim McKean—Dept. of Business Assistance  
Richard Rasmussen—Small Business Assistance Program (SBAP), DEQ  
Rodney Sobin—Small Business Assistance Program (SBAP), DEQ

**Roundtable**

Mike Eisenman and Stu Neal kicked off a discussion on enhancing VACAN participation and outreach. Part of the discussion was on the VACAN web pages, including suggestion of placing the VACAN mission statement at the top of the first VACAN page. There was also a view that the mission statement should be revised to emphasize providing service to business with dissemination of information and knowledge to service providers as a means to that end. This should be what VACAN strives to deliver.

The group also discussed targeting speakers and participants most relevant to achieving the mission, with an emphasis on engaging group that can serve as multipliers by being able to re-broadcast widely information shared by VACAN. The role of private companies (e.g., Capital One was for its reach to small business as the largest SBA lender) and ethnic business associations (e.g., Hispanic and Asian-American chambers as well as others) was noted, along with counties, in addition to state agencies, SBDCs, and other entities. VACAN should aim for 15-20 core participants. There was also a view that a calendar of speakers available in advance would enhance participation.

Jim McKean provided an update on VDBA activities, including workshops for entrepreneurs, SWAM workshops and webinars, that VDBA Workforce Services is now the Virginia Job Investment Program, and continuing work of the Virginia Small Business Finance Authority. Business Appreciation Week will occur in the third week of May and will be recognized by various events across the state, including a breakfast at the Richmond Convention Center. There was also discussion and some suggestions regarding the VDBA website and listing of resources for business.

Richard Rasmussen discussed the upcoming DEQ SBAP dry cleaning workshops that will occur in Roanoke (April 24), Danville (25<sup>th</sup>), Portsmouth (26<sup>th</sup>) and Chester (May 8) as well as a multi-jurisdictional workshop with Maryland and the District of Columbia on June 24 at the Fairfax Co. Government Center.

After a discussion of the SBA-EPA effort to target truckers for SBA loans for anti-idling and other energy/environmentally favorable measures (an effort whose genesis was in discussions between DEQ SBAP and SBA Richmond office), Stu Neal mentioned some energy and environmental technology entrepreneurs with whom he is working, including

a developer of a technology for real-time monitoring of engine oil, engine coolant, and fuel quality (which can enhance vehicle maintenance and reduce number of oil changes, thus conserving resources and funds) and a developer of portable water filtration and ultraviolet disinfection technology incorporating real-time monitoring.

**Next Meeting**

Thursday, June 28, 2007 at 10:00 am DEQ Piedmont Regional Office.